

**§ 79a. Necessity for control of holding companies****(a) Interstate nature of holding companies**

Public-utility holding companies and their subsidiary companies are affected with a national public interest in that, among other things, (1) their securities are widely marketed and distributed by means of the mails and instrumentalities of interstate commerce and are sold to a large number of investors in different States; (2) their service, sales, construction, and other contracts and arrangements are often made and performed by means of the mails and instrumentalities of interstate commerce; (3) their subsidiary public-utility companies often sell and transport gas and electric energy by the use of means and instrumentalities of interstate commerce; (4) their practices in respect of and control over subsidiary companies often materially affect the interstate commerce in which those companies engage; (5) their activities extending over many States are not susceptible of effective control by any State and make difficult, if not impossible, effective State regulation of public-utility companies.

**(b) Protection of investors and interests of consumers**

Upon the basis of facts disclosed by the reports of the Federal Trade Commission made pursuant to S. Res. 83 (Seventieth Congress, first session), the reports of the Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce, House of Representatives, made pursuant to H. Res. 59 (Seventy-second Congress, first session) and H. J. Res. 572 (Seventy-second Congress, second session) and otherwise disclosed and ascertained, it is declared that the national public interest, the interest of investors in the securities of holding companies and their subsidiary companies and affiliates, and the interest of consumers of electric energy and natural and manufactured gas, are or may be adversely affected—

(1) when such investors cannot obtain the information necessary to appraise the financial position or earning power of the issuers, because of the absence of uniform standard accounts; when such securities are issued without the approval or consent of the States having jurisdiction over subsidiary public-utility companies; when such securities are issued upon the basis of fictitious or unsound asset values having no fair relation to the sums invested in or the earning capacity of the properties and upon the basis of paper profits from intercompany transactions, or in anticipation of excessive revenues from subsidiary public-utility companies; when such securities are issued by a subsidiary public-utility company under circumstances which subject such company to the burden of supporting an overcapitalized structure and tend to prevent voluntary rate reductions;

(2) when subsidiary public-utility companies are subjected to excessive charges for services, construction work, equipment, and materials, or enter into transactions in which evils result from an absence of arm's-length bargaining or from restraint of free and independent competition; when service, management, construction, and other contracts involve the allocation

of charges among subsidiary public-utility companies in different States so as to present problems of regulation which cannot be dealt with effectively by the States;

(3) when control of subsidiary public-utility companies affects the accounting practices and rate, dividend, and other policies of such companies so as to complicate and obstruct State regulation of such companies, or when control of such companies is exerted through disproportionately small investment;

(4) when the growth and extension of holding companies bears no relation to economy of management and operation or the integration and coordination of related operating properties; or

(5) when in any other respect there is lack of economy of management and operation of public-utility companies or lack of efficiency and adequacy of service rendered by such companies, or lack of effective public regulation, or lack of economies in the raising of capital.

**(c) Declaration of policy of chapter**

When abuses of the character above enumerated become persistent and wide-spread the holding company becomes an agency which, unless regulated, is injurious to investors, consumers, and the general public; and it is declared to be the policy of this chapter, in accordance with which policy all the provisions of this chapter shall be interpreted, to meet the problems and eliminate the evils as enumerated in this section, connected with public-utility holding companies which are engaged in interstate commerce or in activities which directly affect or burden interstate commerce; and for the purpose of effectuating such policy to compel the simplification of public-utility holding-company systems and the elimination thereof of properties detrimental to the proper functioning of such systems, and to provide as soon as practicable for the elimination of public-utility holding companies except as otherwise expressly provided in this chapter.

(Aug. 26, 1935, ch. 687, title I, §1, 49 Stat. 803.)

**CHANGE OF NAME**

Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce of House of Representatives changed to Committee on Energy and Commerce immediately prior to noon on Jan. 3, 1981, by House Resolution No. 549, Ninety-sixth Congress, Mar. 25, 1980. Committee on Energy and Commerce of House of Representatives treated as referring to Committee on Commerce of House of Representatives by section 1(a) of Pub. L. 104-14, set out as a note preceding section 21 of Title 2, The Congress. Committee on Commerce of House of Representatives changed to Committee on Energy and Commerce of House of Representatives, and jurisdiction over matters relating to securities and exchanges and insurance generally transferred to Committee on Financial Services of House of Representatives by House Resolution No. 5, One Hundred Seventh Congress, Jan. 3, 2001.

**SECTION REFERRED TO IN OTHER SECTIONS**

This section is referred to in title 16 section 839f.

**§ 79b. Definitions; application of chapter****(a) Definitions**

When used in this chapter, unless the context otherwise requires—

(1) "Person" means an individual or company.

(2) "Company" means a corporation, a partnership, an association, a joint-stock company, a business trust, or an organized group of persons, whether incorporated or not; or any receiver, trustee, or other liquidating agent of any of the foregoing in his capacity as such.

(3) "Electric utility company" means any company which owns or operates facilities used for the generation, transmission, or distribution of electric energy for sale, other than sale to tenants or employees of the company operating such facilities for their own use and not for resale. The Commission, upon application, shall by order declare a company operating any such facilities not to be an electric utility company if the Commission finds that (A) such company is primarily engaged in one or more businesses other than the business of an electric utility company, and by reason of the small amount of electric energy sold by such company it is not necessary in the public interest or for the protection of investors or consumers that such company be considered an electric utility company for the purposes of this chapter, or (B) such company is one operating within a single State, and substantially all of its outstanding securities are owned directly or indirectly by another company to which such operating company sells or furnishes electric energy which it generates; such other company uses and does not resell such electric energy, is engaged primarily in manufacturing (other than the manufacturing of electric energy or gas) and is not controlled by any other company; and by reason of the small amount of electric energy sold or furnished by such operating company to other persons it is not necessary in the public interest or for the protection of investors or consumers that it be considered an electric utility company for the purposes of this chapter. The filing of an application hereunder in good faith shall exempt such company (and the owner of the facilities operated by such company) from the application of this paragraph until the Commission has acted upon such application. As a condition to the entry of any such order, and as a part thereof, the Commission may require application to be made periodically for a renewal of such order, and may require the filing of such periodic or special reports regarding the business of the company as the Commission may find necessary or appropriate to insure that such company continues to be entitled to such exemption during the period for which such order is effective. The Commission, upon its own motion or upon application, shall revoke such order whenever it finds that the conditions specified in clause (A) or (B) of this paragraph are not satisfied in the case of such company. Any action of the Commission under the preceding sentence shall be by order. Application under this paragraph may be made by the company in respect of which the order is to be issued or by the owner of the facilities operated by such company. Any order issued under this paragraph shall apply equally to such company and such owner. The Commis-

sion may by rules or regulations conditionally or unconditionally provide that any specified class or classes of companies which it determines to satisfy the conditions specified in clause (A) or (B) of this paragraph, and the owners of the facilities operated by such companies, shall not be deemed electric utility companies within the meaning of this paragraph.

(4) "Gas utility company" means any company which owns or operates facilities used for the distribution at retail (other than distribution only in enclosed portable containers, or distribution to tenants or employees of the company operating such facilities for their own use and not for resale) of natural or manufactured gas for heat, light, or power. The Commission, upon application, shall by order declare a company operating any such facilities not to be a gas utility company if the Commission finds that (A) such company is primarily engaged in one or more businesses other than the business of a gas utility company, and (B) by reason of the small amount of natural or manufactured gas distributed at retail by such company it is not necessary in the public interest or for the protection of investors or consumers that such company be considered a gas utility company for the purposes of this chapter. The filing of an application hereunder in good faith shall exempt such company (and the owner of the facilities operated by such company) from the application of this paragraph until the Commission has acted upon such application. As a condition to the entry of any such order, and as a part thereof, the Commission may require application to be made periodically for a renewal of such order, and may require the filing of such periodic or special reports regarding the business of the company as the Commission may find necessary or appropriate to insure that such company continues to be entitled to such exemption during the period for which such order is effective. The Commission, upon its own motion or upon application, shall revoke such order whenever it finds that the conditions specified in clauses (A) and (B) of this paragraph are not satisfied in the case of such company. Any action of the Commission under the preceding sentence shall be by order. Application under this paragraph may be made by the company in respect of which the order is to be issued or by the owner of the facilities operated by such company. Any order issued under this paragraph shall apply equally to such company and such owner. The Commission may by rules or regulations conditionally or unconditionally provide that any specified class or classes of companies which it determines to satisfy the conditions specified in clauses (A) and (B) of this paragraph, and the owners of the facilities operated by such companies, shall not be deemed gas utility companies within the meaning of this paragraph.

(5) "Public-utility company" means an electric utility company or a gas utility company.

(6) "Commission" means the Securities and Exchange Commission.

(7) "Holding company" means—

(A) any company which directly or indirectly owns, controls, or holds with power to

vote, 10 per centum or more of the outstanding voting securities of a public-utility company or of a company which is a holding company by virtue of this clause or clause (B) of this paragraph, unless the Commission, as hereinafter provided, by order declares such company not to be a holding company; and

(B) any person which the Commission determines, after notice and opportunity for hearing, directly or indirectly to exercise (either alone or pursuant to an arrangement or understanding with one or more other persons) such a controlling influence over the management or policies of any public-utility or holding company as to make it necessary or appropriate in the public interest or for the protection of investors or consumers that such person be subject to the obligations, duties, and liabilities imposed in this chapter upon holding companies.

The Commission, upon application, shall by order declare that a company is not a holding company under clause (A) of this paragraph if the Commission finds that the applicant (i) does not, either alone or pursuant to an arrangement or understanding with one or more other persons, directly or indirectly control a public-utility or holding company either through one or more intermediary persons or by any means or device whatsoever, (ii) is not an intermediary company through which such control is exercised, and (iii) does not, directly or indirectly, exercise (either alone or pursuant to an arrangement or understanding with one or more other persons) such a controlling influence over the management or policies of any public-utility or holding company as to make it necessary or appropriate in the public interest or for the protection of investors or consumers that the applicant be subject to the obligations, duties, and liabilities imposed in this chapter upon holding companies. The filing of an application hereunder in good faith by a company other than a registered holding company shall exempt the applicant from any obligation, duty, or liability imposed in this chapter upon the applicant as a holding company, until the Commission has acted upon such application. Within a reasonable time after the receipt of any application hereunder, the Commission shall enter an order granting, or, after notice and opportunity for hearing, denying or otherwise disposing of, such application. As a condition to the entry of any order granting such application and as a part of any such order, the Commission may require the applicant to apply periodically for a renewal of such order and to do or refrain from doing such acts or things, in respect of exercise of voting rights, control over proxies, designation of officers and directors, existence of interlocking officers, directors and other relationships, and submission of periodic or special reports regarding affiliations or intercorporate relationships of the applicant, as the Commission may find necessary or appropriate to ensure that in the case of the applicant the conditions specified in clauses (i), (ii), and (iii) of this paragraph are satisfied during the period for which such order is effective. The

Commission, upon its own motion or upon application of the company affected, shall revoke the order declaring such company not to be a holding company whenever in its judgment any condition specified in clauses (i), (ii), or (iii) of this paragraph is not satisfied in the case of such company, or modify the terms of such order whenever in its judgment such modification is necessary to ensure that in the case of such company the conditions specified in clauses (i), (ii), and (iii) of this paragraph are satisfied during the period for which such order is effective. Any action of the Commission under the preceding sentence shall be by order.

(8) "Subsidiary company" of a specified holding company means—

(A) any company 10 per centum or more of the outstanding voting securities of which are directly or indirectly owned, controlled, or held with power to vote, by such holding company (or by a company that is a subsidiary company of such holding company by virtue of this clause or clause (B) of this paragraph), unless the Commission, as hereinafter provided, by order declares such company not to be a subsidiary company of such holding company; and

(B) any person the management or policies of which the Commission, after notice and opportunity for hearing, determines to be subject to a controlling influence, directly or indirectly, by such holding company (either alone or pursuant to an arrangement or understanding with one or more other persons) so as to make it necessary or appropriate in the public interest or for the protection of investors or consumers that such person be subject to the obligations, duties, and liabilities imposed in this chapter upon subsidiary companies of holding companies.

The Commission, upon application, shall by order declare that a company is not a subsidiary company of a specified holding company under clause (A) of this paragraph if the Commission finds that (i) the applicant is not controlled, directly or indirectly, by such holding company (either alone or pursuant to an arrangement or understanding with one or more other persons) either through one or more intermediary persons or by any means or device whatsoever, (ii) the applicant is not an intermediary company through which such control of another company is exercised, and (iii) the management or policies of the applicant are not subject to a controlling influence, directly or indirectly, by such holding company (either alone or pursuant to an arrangement or understanding with one or more other persons) so as to make it necessary or appropriate in the public interest or for the protection of investors or consumers that the applicant be subject to the obligations, duties, and liabilities imposed in this chapter upon subsidiary companies of holding companies. The filing of an application hereunder in good faith shall exempt the applicant from any obligation, duty, or liability imposed in this chapter upon the applicant as a subsidiary company of such specified holding company until the Commission has acted upon such application.

Within a reasonable time after the receipt of any application hereunder, the Commission shall enter an order granting, or, after notice and opportunity for hearing, denying or otherwise disposing of, such application. As a condition to the entry of, and as a part of, any order granting such application, the Commission may require the applicant to apply periodically for a renewal of such order and to file such periodic or special reports regarding the affiliations or intercorporate relationships of the applicant as the Commission may find necessary or appropriate to enable it to determine whether in the case of the applicant the conditions specified in clauses (i), (ii), and (iii) of this paragraph are satisfied during the period for which such order is effective. The Commission, upon its own motion or upon application, shall revoke the order declaring such company not to be a subsidiary company whenever in its judgment any condition specified in clauses (i), (ii), or (iii) of this paragraph is not satisfied in the case of such company, or modify the terms of such order whenever in its judgment such modification is necessary to ensure that in the case of such company the conditions specified in clauses (i), (ii), and (iii) of this paragraph are satisfied during the period for which such order is effective. Any action of the Commission under the preceding sentence shall be by order. Any application under this paragraph may be made by the holding company or the company in respect of which the order is to be entered, but as used in this paragraph the term "applicant" means only the company in respect of which the order is to be entered.

(9) "Holding-company system" means any holding company, together with all its subsidiary companies, and all mutual service companies (as defined in paragraph (13) of this subsection) of which such holding company or any subsidiary company thereof is a member company (as defined in paragraph (14) of this subsection).

(10) "Associate company" of a company means any company in the same holding-company system with such company.

(11) "Affiliate" of a specified company means—

(A) any person that directly or indirectly owns, controls, or holds with power to vote, 5 per centum or more of the outstanding voting securities of such specified company;

(B) any company 5 per centum or more of whose outstanding voting securities are owned, controlled, or held with power to vote, directly or indirectly, by such specified company;

(C) any individual who is an officer or director of such specified company, or of any company which is an affiliate thereof under clause (A) of this paragraph; and

(D) any person or class of persons that the Commission determines, after appropriate notice and opportunity for hearing, to stand in such relation to such specified company that there is liable to be such an absence of arm's-length bargaining in transactions between them as to make it necessary or appropriate in the public interest or for the

protection of investors or consumers that such person be subject to the obligations, duties, and liabilities imposed in this chapter upon affiliates of a company.

(12) "Registered holding company" means a person whose registration is in effect under section 79e of this title.

(13) "Mutual service company" means a company approved as a mutual service company under section 79m of this title.

(14) "Member company" means a company which is a member of an association or group of companies mutually served by a mutual service company.

(15) "Director" means any director of a corporation or any individual who performs similar functions in respect of any company.

(16) "Security" means any note, draft, stock, treasury stock, bond, debenture, certificate of interest or participation in any profit-sharing agreement or in any oil, gas, other mineral royalty or lease, any collateral-trust certificate, preorganization certificate or subscription, transferable share, investment contract, voting-trust certificate, certificate of deposit for a security, receiver's or trustee's certificate, or, in general, any instrument commonly known as a "security"; or any certificate of interest or participation in, temporary or interim certificate for, receipt for, guaranty of, assumption of liability on, or warrant or right to subscribe to or purchase, any of the foregoing.

(17) "Voting security" means any security presently entitling the owner or holder thereof to vote in the direction or management of the affairs of a company, or any security issued under or pursuant to any trust, agreement, or arrangement whereby a trustee or trustees or agent or agents for the owner or holder of such security are presently entitled to vote in the direction or management of the affairs of a company; and a specified per centum of the outstanding voting securities of a company means such amount of the outstanding voting securities of such company as entitles the holder or holders thereof to cast said specified per centum of the aggregate votes which the holders of all the outstanding voting securities of such company are entitled to cast in the direction or management of the affairs of such company.

(18) "Utility assets" means the facilities, in place, of any electric utility company or gas utility company for the production, transmission, transportation, or distribution of electric energy or natural or manufactured gas.

(19) "Service contract" means any contract, agreement, or understanding whereby a person undertakes to sell or furnish, for a charge, any managerial, financial, legal, engineering, purchasing, marketing, auditing, statistical, advertising, publicity, tax, research, or any other service, information, or data.

(20) "Sales contract" means any contract, agreement, or understanding whereby a person undertakes to sell, lease, or furnish, for a charge, any goods, equipment, materials, supplies, appliances, or similar property. As used in this paragraph the term "property" does

not include electric energy or natural or manufactured gas.

(21) "Construction contract" means any contract, agreement, or understanding for the construction, extension, improvement, maintenance, or repair of the facilities or any part thereof of a company for a charge.

(22) "Buy", "acquire", "acquisition", or "purchase" includes any purchase, acquisition by lease, exchange, merger, consolidation, or other acquisition.

(23) "Sale" or "sell" includes any sale, disposition by lease, exchange or pledge, or other disposition.

(24) "State" means any State of the United States or the District of Columbia.

(25) "United States", when used in a geographical sense, means the States.

(26) "State commission" means any commission, board, agency, or officer, by whatever name designated, of a State, municipality, or other political subdivision of a State which under the law of such State has jurisdiction to regulate public-utility companies.

(27) "State securities commission" means any commission, board, agency, or officer, by whatever name designated, other than a State commission as defined in paragraph (26) of this subsection, which under the law of a State has jurisdiction to regulate, approve, or control the issue or sale of a security by a company.

(28) "Interstate commerce" means trade, commerce, transportation, transmission, or communication among the several States or between any State and any place outside thereof.

(29) "Integrated public-utility system" means—

(A) As applied to electric utility companies, a system consisting of one or more units of generating plants and/or transmission lines and/or distributing facilities, whose utility assets, whether owned by one or more electric utility companies, are physically interconnected or capable of physical interconnection and which under normal conditions may be economically operated as a single interconnected and coordinated system confined in its operations to a single area or region, in one or more States, not so large as to impair (considering the state of the art and the area or region affected) the advantages of localized management, efficient operation, and the effectiveness of regulation; and

(B) As applied to gas utility companies, a system consisting of one or more gas utility companies which are so located and related that substantial economies may be effectuated by being operated as a single coordinated system confined in its operations to a single area or region, in one or more States, not so large as to impair (considering the state of the art and the area or region affected) the advantages of localized management, efficient operation, and the effectiveness of regulation: *Provided*, That gas utility companies deriving natural gas from a common source of supply may be deemed to be included in a single area or region.

**(b) Order of Commission essential to status as "holding company", "subsidiary company", or "affiliate"**

No person shall be deemed to be a holding company under clause (B) of paragraph (7) of subsection (a) of this section, or a subsidiary company under clause (B) of paragraph (8) of such subsection, or an affiliate under clause (D) of paragraph (11) of such subsection, unless the Commission, after appropriate notice and opportunity for hearing, has issued an order declaring such person to be a holding company, a subsidiary company, or an affiliate, or declaring a class of which such person is a member to be affiliates. Such an order shall not become effective for at least thirty days after the mailing of a copy thereof to the person thereby declared to be a holding company, subsidiary company, or affiliate; or, in the case of determination of affiliates by classes, until at least thirty days after appropriate publication thereof in such manner as the Commission shall determine. Whenever the Commission, on its own motion or upon application by the person declared to be a holding company, subsidiary company, or affiliate, finds that the circumstances which gave rise to the issuance of any such order no longer exist, the Commission shall by order revoke such order.

**(c) Chapter inapplicable to United States, States, or their governmental agencies**

No provision in this chapter shall apply to, or be deemed to include, the United States, a State, or any political subdivision of a State, or any agency, authority, or instrumentality of any one or more of the foregoing, or any corporation which is wholly owned directly or indirectly by any one or more of the foregoing, or any officer, agent, or employee of any of the foregoing acting as such in the course of his official duty, unless such provision makes specific reference thereto.

(Aug. 26, 1935, ch. 687, title I, § 2, 49 Stat. 804.)

**TRANSFER OF FUNCTIONS**

For transfer of functions of Securities and Exchange Commission, with certain exceptions, to Chairman of such Commission, see Reorg. Plan No. 10 of 1950, §§ 1, 2, eff. May 24, 1950, 15 F.R. 3175, 64 Stat. 1265, set out under section 78d of this title.

**NONAPPLICABILITY OF CHAPTER**

Pub. L. 102-486, title IV, § 404(c), Oct. 24, 1992, 106 Stat. 2880, provided that:

"(1) A company shall not be considered to be a gas utility company under section 2(a)(4) of the Public Utility Holding Company Act of 1935 (15 U.S.C. 79b(a)(4)) solely because it owns or operates facilities used for the distribution at retail of vehicular natural gas.

"(2) Notwithstanding section 11(b)(1) of the Public Utility Holding Company Act of 1935 (15 U.S.C. 79k(b)(1)), a holding company registered under such Act [15 U.S.C. 79 et seq.] solely by reason of the application of section 2(a)(7)(A) or (B) of such Act with respect to control of a gas utility company or subsidiary thereof, may acquire or retain, in any geographic area, any interest in a company that is not a public utility company and which, as a primary business, is involved in the sale of vehicular natural gas or the manufacture, sale, transport, installation, servicing, or financing of equipment related to the sale for consumption of vehicular natural gas.